



State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

*****NEWS RELEASE*****

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DPI 2007-88

Wednesday, September 5, 2007

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Four Teachers of the Year exemplify quality teaching

*Tierney-Ley, Oswald, Karban, and Kostelnik to represent
Wisconsin's PK-12 public school teaching corps for 2007-08 school year*

MADISON—"These educators represent the quality teaching that is the foundation of our New Wisconsin Promise," said State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster in announcing the four teachers who will represent Wisconsin's PK-12 teaching corps for the 2007-08 school year.

"Mary Tierney-Ley, Beth Oswald, Thomas Karban, and Kathryn Kostelnik are devoted to helping our students learn the 21st century skills they will need to be successful. These four individuals also reach out to families, involve their communities, and collaborate with other educators: characteristics that exemplify the thousands of quality educators teaching in our classrooms," Burmaster said.

Tierney-Ley of Stevens Point is a fourth-grade teacher at Rosholt Elementary School and will serve as the Elementary Teacher of the Year. Oswald of Milton teaches seventh- and eighth-grade world history at J.C. McKenna Middle School in the Evansville Community School District and will serve as the Middle/Junior High School Teacher of the Year. Karban of Marinette is the 11th- and 12th-grade technology education teacher at Oconto Falls High School and will serve as the High School Teacher of the Year. Kostelnik of Glendale was nominated as the library media specialist for North Junior High School in the Menomonee Falls School District. She currently works as a library media specialist at Menomonee Falls High School and will serve as the Special Services Teacher of the Year.

Burmaster will honor the four Teachers of the Year on Sept. 20 during her State of Education speech and awards ceremony at the State Capitol in Madison.

A panel of educators, parents, and community leaders selected Wisconsin's four Teachers of the Year from a pool of 86 Kohl Teacher Fellows, who were named in spring 2007. The four Teachers of the Year are chosen for their ability to inspire students' love of learning, instructional innovation and leadership, and commitment to community involvement. Later this month, the same committee will select one Teacher of the Year to represent Wisconsin in the National Teacher of the Year program.

(more)

Elementary Teacher of the Year

A teacher since 1985, Tierney-Ley has been at Rosholt Elementary School since 1991. She holds a bachelor of science degree in elementary education from the University of Wisconsin-Platteville and a master's degree in teacher leadership from Silver Lake College in Manitowoc. A parent nominated Tierney-Ley for teaching honors for "her enthusiasm for teaching and the connections she encourages between students and their families." The parent cited Tierney-Ley's Family Writing Journals, which develop student writing skills and foster school-family communication in her nomination.

Middle/Junior High School Teacher of the Year

Oswald has been teaching world history in Evansville since 1996. She holds an associate degree from the University of Wisconsin Center in Rock County, a bachelor of arts degree from Beloit College, and a master of education degree in professional development from the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse. McKenna Middle School Principal Robert Flaherty nominated Oswald for her ability to "hook" all of her students into learning in the classroom, for her leadership in creating integrated units in all subject areas, and for spearheading service projects via student government.

High School Teacher of the Year

Karban began his teaching career in 1980 in West Allis, moving to Oconto Falls High School in 1997. His classes include small engines, welding, and motorcycle fundamentals. He holds a bachelor of science degree from the University of Wisconsin-Stout and a master of arts in education from Viterbo College in La Crosse. He has pursued additional graduate credits at both Viterbo and UW-Oshkosh. Principal Bruce Russell nominated Karban for being "an energetic teacher who finds a multitude of ways to not only teach, but to inspire his students." Additionally, he cited Karban's ability to encourage students to strive for exemplary performance while instilling a sense of responsibility, leadership, and service.

Special Services Teacher of the Year

Kostelnik began her career in education in 1991, teaching Title I language arts in Milwaukee. She moved to North Junior High School in 1998 after earning her master's of library and information science degree from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. She holds an elementary education degree from UW-Madison. Principal Barbara Tays nominated Kostelnik in recognition of the essential role she plays in the academic development of students. Kostelnik also was cited for her ability to work with teachers to incorporate technology into the curriculum and connect class projects with information literacy and research skills. Kostelnik began working at Menomonee Falls High School this school year.

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